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SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Difficulties of the Polish Merchant Marine in
25X1A Getting Tonnage and Cargo for China Trade

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1. The contract of the Sino-Polish Sea Transport Company provides for 24 ships for traffic between Poland and Communist China, with 12 vessels furnished by each country. Making available ten ships, Poland nearly complied with her obligations while the Chinese did not furnish even one ship. However, the Chinese supplied credit in Switzerland and part of their assets in New York for the purchase of ships. These funds allegedly came from previous export proceeds. Poland undertook to supply shipmasters, officers and technical personnel for Chinese vessels, while China contracted to provide the remaining personnel, such as sailors. A number of Polish crew members were said to have left for China. The manager of the Polish Ocean Lines (POL) recently returned from China. The Polish agent with the Sino-Polish Transport Company is one Przewoski, who lives in Peking. Previously, he was an employee of the Polish-British Steamship Company in Gdynia. His wife is also in Peking. (1)
2. While in Hamburg in July 1951, Wt. Szynarowski, manager of the POL, said that it was extremely difficult for Poland to find tonnage. He said that the Scandinavians also caused difficulties. Accordingly, Poland was unable to meet the ever-growing demand of the Soviets. The stoppage in Poland's building program was an additional factor. The annual increase of 80,000 tons under the 6-year-plan will not be achieved and Poland can expect only a small output from her own shipyards. (2)
3. On his return from a voyage to China, Captain Rembowski, master of the Polish M/S Pokoj reported on 30 July 1951 that he as well as other Polish shipmasters wished to quit the Far East service. He planned to hand over the command of his ship under some pretext or other and get an appointment as master of a ship on another route. Being a reserve officer, he will first have to serve a period of training. He said that although wages for voyages to China are higher than those on other routes, such appointments are comparable to being in exile, since it is impossible to move without being under permanent surveillance. He said that the Chinese are extremely distrustful, and appear in groups for the most simple negotiations. Since they refuse to speak English, one can only make oneself understood by sign language. During the last voyage of the Pokoj, 30 Chinese were signed on to undergo training. The shipmaster called them vagabonds who would never become sailors. The Chinese failed to comply with their obligation to put ships into operation on the China route while Poland placed recently purchased vessels at the disposal of this service and replaced old ships with new ones.

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4. Rembowski and Captain Pawlowicz, captain of the M/V Przyjazn Narodow said that for the first voyage part of the shipments to China included ammunition, weapons and military equipment. They said that no war material has **recently been shipped to China. They expressed the belief** that these cargoes were more or less in the nature of makeshift shipments and were shipped when no other cargo was available.
5. In July 1951 in Hamburg the Panamanian steamer Montesa, 7,777 GRT, built in 1917, was to take on 2,000 tons of general cargo to China from the Soviet Zone of Germany. However, this cargo was not released because shipments to Communist China are under embargo. Hence, the goods were discharged and stored in the free harbor in Hamburg. On instructions by POL, they will be shipped to Gdynia by Krusaa, a chartered Danish steamer of 2,999 GRT, built in 1939, and from there to China by a Polish vessel. On 9 August 1951 on her voyage to Hamburg, S/S Krusaa was damaged by an underwater obstacle and, beginning 11 August 1951, had to undergo provisional repair in a shipyard in Hamburg. (3)
6. During her stay in Antwerp from 13 to 24 July 1951, the Polish M/V Mazury (909 GRT) took on cables for Taku Bar which were addressed to Gdynia. A transformer weighing about 100 tons was shipped to Stettin. A similar transformer had been shipped to Gdynia aboard the Mazury leaving Antwerp on 23 June 1951. It is not known what has become of these transformers. (1)

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Comments.

- (1) Polish vessels en route to China in early September 1951 included Pokoj which left Suez on 2 September; Pryjazn Narodow which left Suez on 1 July; Kilinski which en route from Novorossisk to Karachi left for Tsingtao on 31 August; Fulaski which arrived in Gdynia from the Far East on 7 August, was in Algiers on 11 September and proceeded to Taku Bar; Warszawa which left Singapore on 13 August and Fiducia a chartered vessel which left Singapore on 2 September. The Dimitri Donskoj of 5,064 GRT was the first Soviet vessel seen on the voyage from Stettin to China and arrived in Port Said on 11 September. These ships were not observed in European ports. Chartered vessels Lurie Skou and Groystoke Castle were homeward bound. At no time was a number of 12 ships observed on the China route as provided by contract.
- (2) To these difficulties **it must be added that, according to unconfirmed information**, most of the ships built in Polish shipyards were purchased or requisitioned by the Soviets.
- (3) The S/S Montesa left Hamburg for Stockholm on 4 August 1951 and passed the Kiel Canal on the same day. Since her arrival in Stockholm was not reported by 13 September, it is possible that she called at another Baltic port probably in Poland. S/S Krusaa left Hamburg for Messina on 8 September 1951.
- (4) For photograph of transformer being transferred on the Mazury from Antwerp to Gdynia on her voyage on 23 June 1951, see Annex.

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